



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
M E M O R A N D U M

OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT BUDGET ANALYST

DATE: April 13, 2011

TO: Councilmember Carl DeMaio

FROM: Andrea Tevlin, Independent Budget Analyst

SUBJECT: Compensation Comparison for EMT Certified Employee

At the Budget & Finance Committee meeting on March 16th, 2011, you requested our office to compare the total compensation of City EMT certified firefighters with EMT certified employees of Rural/Metro. We have reviewed cost detail received from the Fire-Rescue Department and provided it on the following page. Cost detail for City employees assumes a Firefighter II at E-Step, breaking out specialty pay compensation for both EMT certified and Paramedic employees.

San Diego Medical Services (SDMS) Ambulance Staffing and Response Protocols

SDMS is a limited liability company between the city of San Diego and Rural/Metro Ambulance. SDMS ambulances are staffed with one EMT and one Paramedic. More often than not, Rural/Metro provides both the EMT certified and the Paramedic employee; however, the City provides a Firefighter Paramedic on five SDMS ambulances (providing training and skill maintenance opportunities for firefighters). The City also uses its ten "Single Role" employees (one EMT and nine Paramedics) to cover the EMT or Paramedic position on three ambulances. City Fire-Rescue Department "Single Role" employees only provide emergency medical response services and are not firefighters. It is important to note that the City is reimbursed for all Fire-Rescue personnel on SDMS ambulances.

SDMS has approximately 24 to 32 ambulances in service at any time based on historical call experience. When not in ambulances in the field, all SDMS ambulance employees may perform other duties while on standby for emergency calls at City fire stations.

County EMS response protocols require two Paramedics to be dispatched to every Level 1 (most serious) call for medical assistance. In order to meet this requirement, a SDMS ambulance and a fire engine (each with a Paramedic on board) are dispatched to each Level 1 call. In addition to a Firefighter Paramedic, a fire engine crew also has three EMT certified firefighters on board (Captain, Engineer and Firefighter). The fire engine is often first to reach the emergency site. In combination, the ambulance and the fire engine deliver two paramedics and four EMT certified personnel to the emergency site.

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Although exceeding the County required response threshold by four EMTs, the current service delivery model of dispatching both an ambulance and a fire engine allows for quicker response, with support personnel and greater response capabilities. Citizens requiring medical assistance often need to be rescued/extricated from vehicles or other hazardous conditions/locations prior to treatment. City fire engine personnel are prepared for any emergency while Rural/Metro ambulance personnel do not possess the training/equipment for special circumstance medical emergencies. Cross-trained firefighter personnel are also trained to handle unique non-medical emergencies that are occasionally encountered in the course of responding to Level 1 calls for medical assistance.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrea Tevlin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Andrea" and last name "Tevlin" clearly distinguishable.

Andrea Tevlin

Independent Budget Analyst

Attachment

cc: City Council